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THE CHINESE PUZZLE.

BY

A. DIOSY





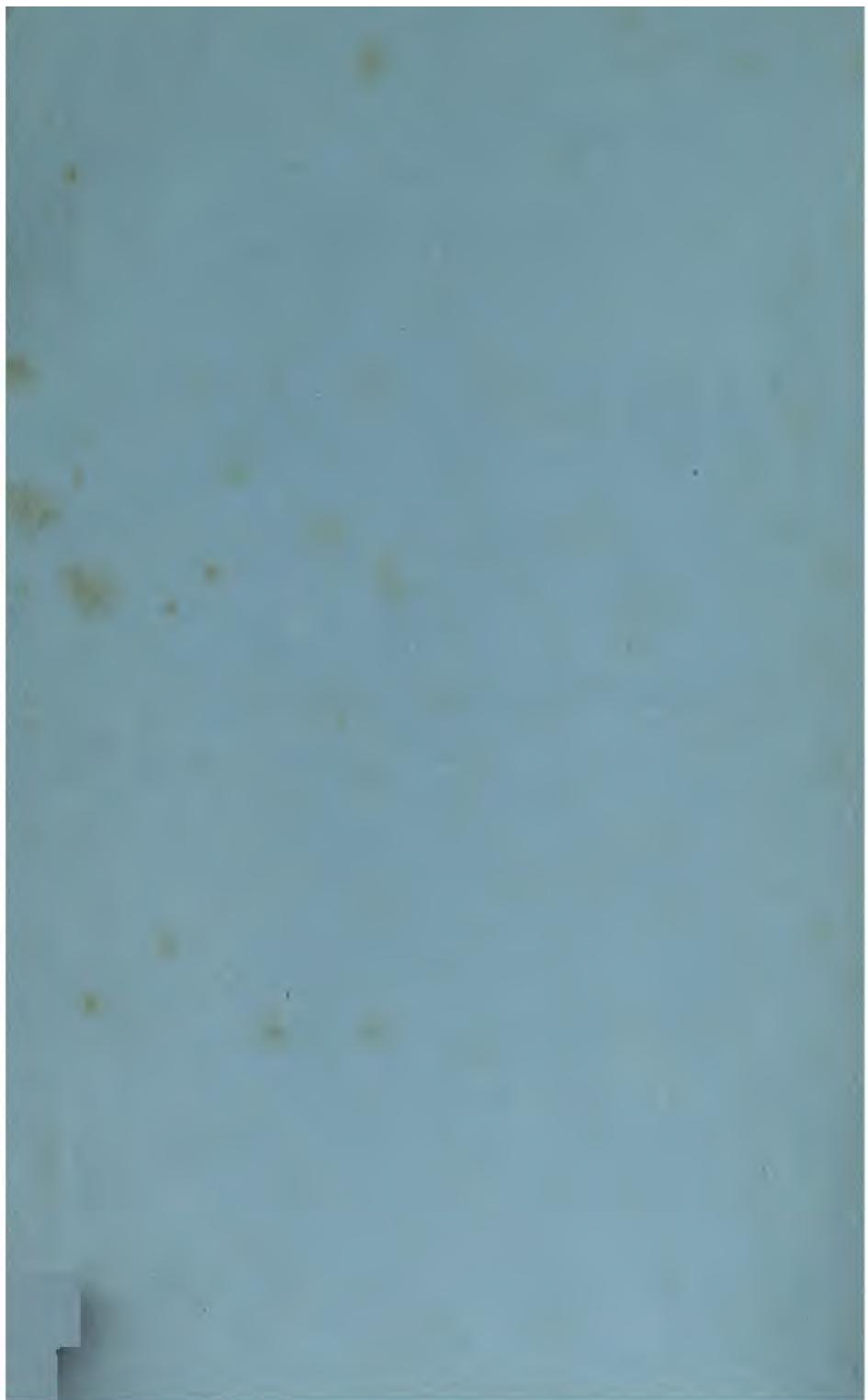
ABRIDGED REPORT
OF
AN ADDRESS
ON THE
"CHINESE PUZZLE,"
DELIVERED BY
Mr. ARTHUR DIÓSY,
F.R.G.S., &c.,
AT THE
Junior Constitutional Club,
PICCADILLY,
ON
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16TH, 1901.

Sir A. TRENDELL, C.M.G., in the Chair.

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On Wednesday, January 16th, 1901, at the Junior Constitutional Club, Piccadilly, Mr. ARTHUR DIÓSY, F.R.G.S., Founder of the Japan Society and Vice-Chairman of its Council, delivered an Address on "The Chinese Puzzle," before a large and appreciative audience.

Mr. ARTHUR DIÓSY, who was received with applause, said: Sir Arthur Trendell and Gentlemen, I am delighted indeed to see such a large attendance in this Library this evening, and I am doubly glad, not only because I take it as a great compliment to myself personally, but because the large number that have assembled here to-night shows without doubt your great intellectual superiority over the average run of those whom you so very kindly send to represent you at Westminster. (Laughter.) For, on Friday, the 7th of last month, a Mr. Joseph Walton, a very painstaking and conscientious Member of Parliament, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in the Far East eighteen months ago, rose in his place in the House and endeavoured to initiate a Chinese debate. Now, what happened? I will tell you in a few words, quoting literally from a soberly-edited evening paper, *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Said *The Pall Mall Gazette*: "The Chinese Question was discussed, with flagging interest, in a desolate chamber." To-night I see no "desolate chamber" before me, and, as I said before, this reflects the very highest credit upon your intellectual superiority. (Laughter.) There is a reason why the Chinese Question acted in the House of Commons very much in the same sort of way as a debate on Indian finance or the condition of the navy—two absolutely unimportant questions—both having the peculiarity of clearing the House in a remarkably short space of time. (Laughter.) The reason is the same as that which was at the root of the silence, the absolute silence, on

Chinese questions which was observed by the numerous candidates who were bidding for your suffrages at the recent General Election, a silence also observed by many eminent politicians who supported them on many platforms. Hardly one of these uttered a single word about the Chinese Puzzle. I can hardly blame them for that, for it is a puzzle, the solution of which is taxing some of the wisest brains in three Continents at the present time, and so far, I regret to say, with very little practical result. No, the real reason why you heard so little about this burning question at the time of the General Election, the reason why it failed to secure even a decently full house at Westminster, is that, undoubtedly, it is not a voting question with the masses of this country at the present moment. It would not exercise a tittle of influence one way or the other in the Election, because the masses observed towards the question an attitude of perfect apathy. It was not so, however, last summer! Last summer the fate of the Europeans in Peking was hanging in the balance, and with that natural bent towards sensationalism which is characteristic of the present day, and perhaps also with that natural sporting instinct which rises spontaneously in the breast of every Briton, the fact that there were odds as to the Europeans in the Legations being alive or not kept up a certain amount of interest. (Ironical laughter.) People going to business in the morning said: "Do you think they are all dead?" One said: "I think they are!" And the man in the corner said: "I don't!" Yes, there was interest, conversation, speculation and excitement; but the moment it was known that the great majority of the Europeans were not only not dead but were in fairly good health the interest began to slacken, and at the present moment there is considerable apathy, which you can measure by the amount of space which is devoted by the daily papers to Chinese affairs. If you measure it with a foot-rule graduated to inches, and half and quarter

inches, you will see that some days you only get an eighth of an inch of China. (Laughter.) This is a very good barometer by which you are able to judge of the public interest which is being taken in the question. Now, the apathy which at present exists is not highly creditable to the intellect of the masses of this country, but, fortunately, from a practical point of view it has some good features. I will endeavour to make my meaning clear to you, I venture to think that those would be ill-advised, would be absolutely unpatriotic, who would attempt at the present time to lash up popular feeling into a national agitation over the state of affairs in the Far East. Those would be, I repeat, ill-advised and unpatriotic who would try by agitation at the present moment to coerce Her Majesty's Government into adopting any other attitude towards the question than the one which they have already taken up, because it was the only one which they could possibly take up just now. You must remember, you must know, if you have never heard it before, that the only policy which is likely to prevail in the Far East, the only policy which is understood by the teeming millions of Chinese, is the policy of the fist—mailed or otherwise. (Loud laughter.) You must remember that at the present moment the fists of Great Britain are busily engaged, and I fear are already rather sore about the knuckles, in another part of the world, and until those fists are once more free to be used in a part of the world other than South Africa, we cannot help the attitude, the apparently supine attitude, which Great Britain at the present time is assuming in the Far East. But only at the present moment, for when the South African crisis has come to an end—as it assuredly must do some day—when that great problem has been settled once for all, then it will behove us, it will behove every patriotic Briton, to see that those fists of Great Britain are put into pickle and hardened, in order that

their striking power may be increased, not doubly or trebly but a hundredfold, so that the dread of those British fists may once more become an active factor in the politics of the world, and that the dread of those fists may once more ensure respect for British interests and British dignity, not only in the Far East, where at the present moment they are suffering so grievously, but in every part of the wide world. (Applause.) I hope you will not misunderstand the announcement which has been made that you have been brought together here to listen to something about the Chinese Puzzle. I hope that you have not assembled here for the purpose of hearing me give a blood-curdling recital of all the terrible atrocities that occurred in China last summer and last autumn, and which I am sorry to say are not yet over. I do hope you will not expect me to make your flesh creep with recitals of the terrible massacres that took place, because I can assure you it is not my mission to make your flesh creep. (Laughter.) I would rather this evening attempt to give you a few hints as to the causes which have produced the present sad situation in China, and as to the results that are likely to ensue from that sad situation, for sad it is. I think no man among the white races can help feeling humiliated at the present state of things in China, and more particularly no Briton can help feeling a certain loss of dignity when he contemplates what has taken place in China during the last few months and the present situation in China. The situation I said was a sad one, because it has not even yet emerged from a state of deadlock. You are aware that the plenipotentiaries who were appointed by that mysterious entity which for convenience is called the Chinese Government have not only signed the protocol embodying the conditions of peace, but that the Imperial seal has actually been affixed to ten copies of that instrument. That looks all very comforting for the average newspaper reader, but to

those who know something about the Far East those signatures mean nothing, and the same may be said of the affixing of the Imperial seal. The promises of the ruling powers in China are worth only just as much as the amount of force which the foreign governments are ready to exert in order to keep the authorities up to those promises. I shall endeavour to give you some slight insight into that curious state of things in which the signature of a government pledged to the Emperor's word can be as a mere nothing in the scale, weighing no heavier than a feather. You all know what terrible things took place in China last year. Well, if you see a telegram from Peking (pronounced "Payking"—not, as most people call it, "Pee-king"—for Peking signifies "the northern capital," and there is a "g" sound at the end of it), I say, if you see a telegram from Peking you may as a rule accept it as it stands, especially if it comes from that able, energetic and brave young Australian representing *The Times*--I allude to Dr. Morrison. (Hear, hear.) The two letters of that gentleman describing the siege of the Legations are so far the only complete, true and graphic account which we possess of that terrible time during which the whole civilised world was sitting down and being literally slapped in the face by these Chinese barbarians. If you see a telegram from Tientsin you should at once deduct 45 per cent. for exaggerations and inaccuracies; but if it emanates from Shanghai you must please remember that the tidings from that place are known throughout the Far East as "Shang-lies," which are concocted in the very comfortable armchairs of the luxuriously-appointed clubs there, and, unfortunately, only too often in the whisky bars which abound in that thriving commercial seaport. If, on the other hand, the telegram comes from St. Petersburg, don't believe it at all. (Laughter.) It is, probably, simply a lie! (Renewed laughter.) Personally, I don't believe in calling a spade an agricultural implement, and therefore

when you have found a lie call it a lie. (Laughter.) I have proof positive that a series of lies have emanated from St. Petersburg, chiefly through a paper called the *Novoe Vremya*, the unofficial organ of the Russian Foreign Office. The lie is generally weekly, and among its objects is to sow distrust between Great Britain and her friend in the Far East—I might almost say, with regret, Great Britain's only friend there—I mean Japan. (Applause.) It has the further object of sowing distrust between Great Britain and that great nation of 76 millions of people who, if they knew their own best interests, would be Britain's best friends. But, unfortunately, the Americans don't know their best interests. Having warned you as to how to consume the news which is offered to you daily by telegraph, I am pleased to be able to make an explanation which I think may be useful. You have been told that the atrocities which were committed in China were the work partly of Chinese Soldiers out of hand and partly of the so-called "Boxers." This is not exactly true. The atrocities were committed by Imperial Chinese troops, acting under orders from their officers, in pursuance of the policy decided upon by the criminal rulers of China, a policy of extermination of all strangers, and partly also by the so-called Boxers. But these so-called Boxers do not in reality call themselves Boxers, nor do any of the Chinese or Japanese know them by that name. It is merely a name given for convenience by the English-speaking Journalists in the Far East, because their real name is "the Members of the Patriotic Association of the United Fists." (Loud laughter.) It is just this. The journalists were compelled to call them Boxers for convenience and economy, because at the present rates charged for telegrams from the Far East the cost of repeating the words "Members of the Patriotic Association of the United Harmonious Fists" would not be inconsiderable. They, therefore, dubbed them "Boxers" for short. (Laughter.) It is a convenient term, and I shall continue using it to-night,

though you must not associate them with the noble art of self-defence as practised in this country, either with gloves or without. (Renewed laughter.) Now, I am going to make a statement which will startle you because it is absolutely the plain truth. It is this. If you had all been born Chinese instead of having the good fortune to be born Britons, you would all be Boxers, every one of you. I don't say you would be running about Piccadilly yelling for the blood of all foreigners—(laughter)—and by foreigners I mean everyone in China who is not Chinese. It is necessary to utter this caution, because it is very difficult for the average Briton to realise that he can ever be a foreigner under any circumstances. No, you would not be clamouring for the blood of the foreigner, but you would be aiding and abetting the Boxers to the full extent of your power, because they are nothing more nor less than Chinese patriots, simply and thoroughly imbued with the idea that China is primarily intended for the Chinese. As a nation the Chinese are very well aware that they are badly governed, and they know very well that their government is venal, corrupt and obsolete. So strange, indeed, is human nature that the Chinese would rather be badly governed by people of their own race than ever so well governed by foreigners, or by people of their own race acting under the control and influence of foreigners. I think if you will examine your own minds and hearts on this matter I doubt not that you will find something similar therè in regard to our own country. You may call it patriotism, narrow-mindedness, insularity, or national spirit—it is a spirit which exists all over the world, and which has become particularly strong within the last quarter of a century, a spirit which was tending to be toned down about the middle of the last century, but which is now more powerful than it ever has been. At the present moment it is causing us very considerable trouble in South Africa, and this spirit is doubly imbued in the Chinese: I do not

like to hear it said that the Chinese are so thoroughly anti-foreign. The average Chinaman has no feelings of hatred towards the average foreigner, but, when I say that, I must also add that the average Chinaman entertains the strongest objection to the course that has been taken towards his country within the last ten years by the Great Powers of the world. (Hear, hear.) Think of what has happened only within the last five years. About five years ago China was supposed—and more particularly in this country—to be a great, mighty empire with tremendous potentialities, an empire which might one day be a useful ally for us if ever we had trouble with our great rival in the East—Russia. She was held up to us as a great military bogey; but five years ago that Chinese bogey was laid, and the great Chinese bubble was pricked by the Japanese bayonet. What has been the attitude of the Powers towards China ever since? They said: "Oh, that is the way; that is the sort of country, is it?" And from that time forward they began to treat China very much as if it were a huge, helpless, toothsome pudding. One Power after another walked up to China, surveyed her carefully and said: "I think I should like a slice out of that part!" and forthwith it was taken without leave, or anything of the kind. (Laughter.) Just imagine some of the great Powers coming to our islands, and after looking round saying: "Oh, there is the Isle of Wight; it is a nice place, the scenery is charming and the climate beautiful; I think I should like that! I am not taking it; it is only a lease for ninety-nine years." (Renewed laughter.) And fancy, too, another Power taking over the Isle of Man, and expressing the view that it was likely to become a good property, with such a large excursion traffic; I venture to think we should feel considerably annoyed. Well, and so are the Chinese, and that feeling has been simmering and straining for years. Things move slowly in China. You must remember that

China as a nation is more than 4,000 years old, and you cannot expect a nation which is more than 4,000 years old to go in for sprinting. (Laughter.) She has been irritated for years past by the injudicious methods of some exceedingly good and well-meaning people who want to force upon the Chinese a religion which they do not like, an action that has contributed a good deal to the ill-feeling which has been aroused throughout the country. Now, I think I can make my meaning clear by a reference to the map. It is impossible to deal adequately with the question in the short time at my disposal, but if you will look at the map I will ask you what it was that led to the war between China and Japan, now over six years ago, a war which changed the face of Asia and forms a most important chapter in the history of the world. The reason for that war was the railway, about 3,700 miles in length with its branches, which the Russians built right across Siberia connecting with their European railways. They said they had no intention of going to Port Arthur, but to Vladivostock, on the Pacific Ocean. As soon as they said that, the Japanese, who know the Russians very well—(laughter)—knew that they were actually going there. (Renewed laughter.) Here, in this country, we took very little notice of the building of the railway until it was nearly completed. We were altogether too busy reading the football news in the evening newspapers—(hear, hear, and laughter)—and we really had no time to devote any attention to so distant a part of the world as Siberia. But the Japanese, on the other hand, who have very sharp eyes—although narrow—(laughter)—knew very well what was going on, and decided to seize Port Arthur, which was the key to Peking, just as Peking was the key to China, before the Russians could get there. And they did so at enormous cost, both in life and treasure; they seized it, but it did them no earthly good. The moment they seized it the "long firm" stepped in: Russia, France and

Germany in effect said: "Now little Japan, it is not good for you to be here in Port Arthur, the atmosphere is not healthy for so young a nation; go away and play with your new toys; be a good child and leave us to manage Port Arthur." And Japan had to go. That was a crime committed by the three great bullies, but something almost as bad as a crime was committed by ourselves in allowing it to take place. Lord Rosebery, who was at the Foreign Office at the time, went as far as to say that he refused to join the "long firm." That was very right and proper, but he ought to have gone a step further and sent our China squadron, which was at that time more powerful than all the others in the Far East—I only regret that is no longer the case—and said to the Japanese: "You stay in Port Arthur until you are kicked out!"—(laughter)—and to our own Admiral, "You stay there, too, until you are kicked out!" (Renewed laughter.) No one would have attempted to turn them out, for the very simple reason that at that moment every ton of steam coal in the Far East belonged to us or to the Japanese. If we had chosen to place an embargo upon steam coal all the foreign fleets in the Far East—unless, of course, in our kindness we had been disposed to let them have a scuttlefull or two—would have been compelled to stay out there for ever. (Applause.) We missed that opportunity, and it is one that is never likely to occur again. The Russians have now built up at Port Arthur whole mountains of steam coal; the Germans have erected pyramids of it at Kiaou-Chou, and France in Tong-King, so that the advantage we held six years ago was lost to us for ever, and the opportunity will never occur again. Japan is peopled by 45 millions of people, who, although not by any means angels, are nevertheless as good, as brave, as clever, and as loyal subjects as are to be found in any country in the world. And what of the inhabitants of China? There are between 350 and 400 millions of them; no one knows

exactly how many people there are in China, nor, indeed, how many in the world. A censūs has not yet been found practicable among the cannibals on the Upper Congo, nor in South Africa, so you cannot expect that China should have a very perfect estimate of the number of her population. We may take it roughly that in China there are not far short of 400 millions of people—that is to say, according to some calculations, one-eighth, to others one-third, and to others one-fourth of the whole human race. (Applause.) Taking the most moderate estimate—one-eighth of the inhabitants of the globe—it naturally becomes a question of the greatest possible interest to us to know what sort of people are our yellow-skinned brothers and sisters who constitute more than one-eighth of the human beings in the world. It is extremely difficult to say what sort of people they are. One must avoid making a sweeping assertion about any nation; it would be quite wrong, for instance, to say that *every* Frenchman hates the English,—many do of course,—but you cannot say that of the French nation as a whole any more than you can say that *every* German wears spectacles. (Laughter.) Every nation has its virtues and its faults. It may surprise you to learn that our own British nation, if carefully examined beneath a microscope, might reveal a few small defects. (Renewed laughter.) In the case of China, taken as a whole, those 400 millions are very good people. To begin with they are very sober, which is an important thing. Many of them, of course, are addicted to the vice of opium smoking, but this I will say, from personal investigation, that this vice, great as it is, does not produce in China one-tenth part of the amount of crime that is caused in this country by the abuse of alcohol or, perhaps I should rather say, “arsenical compounds.” (Laughter.) Then again, the Chinese are thrifty to a degree. Indeed we can hardly realise what Scotch thrift, German thrift, or French thrift really are—they are reckless extravagance.

gance, they are lavish, riotous living compared with the thrift of the Chinese people. (Renewed laughter.) You must remember that many millions of Chinese spend their lives in a constant struggle to keep alive. Moreover, they are a very hardworking people. You simply don't know what hard work is, you don't really know the meaning of the word until you witness these toiling millions working to keep themselves alive from early morning until late at night, and they would be working all night if it were not for the fact that artificial light is so expensive. (Loud laughter.) Then, again, they possess domestic virtues to a high degree. As a rule they make good husbands and wives; and as sometimes they have several wives it means a good deal to be a good husband. (Laughter.) As a rule, however, there is only one real wife—the rest are, so to speak, merely subsidiary. (Renewed laughter.) They are excellent parents, too, and they give their children the best education they can afford. The idea of a School Board officer being obliged to go round from lane to lane and court to court to endeavour to compel the people to have their children educated is one that no Chinese, or Japanese, could be brought to understand. It seems to them to be so natural a thing that a parent should want to give his child the best possible education. Again, their children are excellent and exemplary, because, as you know, the whole social fabric of China, and of Japan, is based upon filial piety, respect and veneration for their elders and love and obedience to their parents. The Chinese are, moreover, law-abiding, and, under ordinary circumstances, remarkably peaceful. They have wonderful trading instincts, and in their business relations with foreigners they are scrupulously honest. The Chinese merchant's word is his bond—a fact which arises not, I fear, from any innate virtue, but from the circumstance that, with the experience of generations behind him, he realises that "honesty is the best policy." Then the people are cultured and refined, in their way. The Chinese

"hooligan" certainly exists, but he is rare. This leads me to the statement that in spite of all the qualities to which I have alluded the Chinese have one great vice, and that is their fiendish cruelty, which is ascribable chiefly to their pitiless logic. A Chinaman says: "I am going to punish this person, and consequently I will give him a most unpleasant time." And I will give him the credit of saying that he generally succeeds. The population of China, especially in the Southern provinces, is so dense that there are millions for whom there is no room on land, and who are born on the water and die there, practically never coming ashore at all. The Chinese nation constitutes the greatest danger with which the civilized world has ever stood face to face. And why? These people are civilized. They have a civilization of their own, and a very ancient one too. Remember that 4,000 years ago China was an organised nation, and that life and property in that country were safe. It is stated in the annals of Chinese history that at that time a man could leave his goods by the roadside and go back that day in the following year and pick them up. Now you cannot exactly do that on Holborn Viaduct at the present day. (Laughter.) I have seen such goods as trousers chained up outside the tailors' shops here. (Renewed laughter.) 2,000 years ago China had universities, 2,000 years ago colleges, a system of popular education, public libraries, hospitals, orphanages, and asylums for the widows and blind, and at a time, be it remembered, when the woolly rhinoceros had quite recently been gaily disporting himself in Piccadilly, and the cave bear roaming in the Green Park, and when our ancestors themselves were running about naked but painted blue. (Loud laughter.) You may imagine, therefore, the feelings of the Chinese towards those who, at the present day, are endeavouring to civilize them and whom they utterly scorn. Of course, there are a good many people in China, perhaps a few thousands, who appreciate our civilization.

They are people who understand our civilization and who are very anxious that China should imitate her neighbour Japan, and *adapt*, not "adopt," as much of our civilization as may suit their needs, and go forward on the path of progress. These people are known as Chinese Reformers. Unfortunately, however, they have no hearing in China, because there they have to keep their opinions entirely inside themselves. It is exceedingly unsafe to ventilate them. The reason which prevents the Reformers from speaking out is that they are not anxious that their families should be killed. They do not mind losing their own lives, but they do not want to see innocent people suffer terribly for others' opinions. In regard to the Mandarins, I can only say that when Chinese become Government officials they generally go wrong. I have known Chinese officials who are perfectly upright, but the majority of Mandarins are corrupt and venal in the extreme. It is not sufficient merely to pass an examination to become a Chinese official, you have to find a vacancy, and the best way is to pay for one. (Laughter.) Then you begin to grind down the people under you until you have compensated yourself for your outlay. The examinations, which are the test of a vast accumulation of Chinese learning, last for years. I have known of a case in China of a gay young student who obtained his B.A. at the age of seventy-three, and I have heard, also, of another case in which an undergraduate at the early age of eighty-two was plucked for the third time, and, in consideration of his age and his elegant handwriting, was given the degree of M.A.—*honoris causa*! (Laughter.) We have all heard of

"The young man of Trinity Hall
Who knew next to nothing at all ;
He took his degree at forty-three,
Which is young for Trinity Hall!"

Those of you who are familiar with the British Museum may

possibly have noticed the shelves containing the Imperial Chinese Encyclopædia. These thousands of volumes have been compiled by order of Chinese Emperors, and contain a wonderful amount of information—some accurate and minute, some less accurate. (Laughter.) Of these they are naturally very proud, although they have not as yet had an opportunity of acquiring them for a first cash payment of five shillings through a Chinese *Daily Mail*. (Loud laughter.)

Alluding to a photograph on the screen of Chinese finger-nails and nail-protectors, the Lecturer said: The Mandarins use their long claws chiefly for the purpose of scraping together ill-gotten wealth. The object of wearing the nails so long is to show that the hand of the individual has never done any degrading menial labour. The nail-protectors are fashioned of gold, silver, filigree, or bamboo, and are designed to prevent the nails from breaking or splitting. In this connection I may add that only yesterday some of these curious objects were sold by auction in London. They were nail-cases in gold and enamel "forming part of the loot of the Imperial Palace at Pekin!" This looting is one of the institutions by which we endeavour to impress the Chinese with our civilization. In regard to Li Hung Chang, the Lecturer remarked: This is the well-known Chinese whom you have for years past incorrectly, but quite appropriately, called "Lie Hung Chang." "Lee" it should be. "Lee" is the family name, which comes first in China as well as in Japan. There he is wearing the star of one of the numerous Orders which were conferred upon him during his grand tour in 1897. We gave him the Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order—and a great deal beside. (Laughter.) Lord Mayors and Lord Provosts read addresses to him, although I do not know if I should reckon that among the benefits which he received. (Laughter.) We gave him plenty of champagne, lots of typewriters, sewing-

machines, steam-ploughs, and other things, all of which he took back with him to China. But at the same time he smiled grimly because he knew all the while exactly why we did it. It was because we expected him to buy things of us, and to give us contracts and concessions; but what did he really do? He bought nothing, he gave the contracts to Germany who tendered lower than we did, and the concessions to Russia who bribed him heavily, and of whom he was afraid. (Laughter.) This, forsooth, is the man with whom we are now negotiating. He has, however, some idea of the other powers, whilst the criminal lunatics who surround the Dowager Empress have no conception of any other nation and do not want to have. Describing the cage in which prisoners are barbarously confined by the Chinese, Mr. Diósy observed: Many Europeans, men, women and children, were, I fear, kept in cages of this description last summer, either to die of starvation or to be subsequently taken out to torture. One reason why China is such a hard nut to crack is that it has considerable powers for mischief. There are nearly two millions of soldiers of the old style, not of much account certainly as fighting men, but yet capable of much mischief and annoyance. They are the lowest class of the population, and the officers are drawn from the same class. They are armed with rusty weapons of old design, swords and long spears. (Laughter.) They use a drill book, the latest edition of which is a reprint of that issued in 1320 or 1330, and which is based upon the rules of warfare which were laid down by a great Chinese stratagist about the time of the Saxon Heptarchy here. (Renewed laughter.) It is laid down in this "Manual" that "before going into battle the general in command should cause his bands to play sweet music in order to soften the enemy's heart and to induce him to surrender." (Laughter.) But, unfortunately for us China has another army of about 200,000 to 250,000 men, new style. They are great, strong, strapping fellows, as hard

as iron, they live frugally and are healthy, and have next to no pay, which is generally three quarters over-due. (Laughter.) Altogether, it is a dangerous army, their artillery is superior to anything we have in China, and it may surprise you to learn that we have no guns in South Africa equal to those Chinese guns at Tientsin. These soldiers have been carefully trained for years past by foreign officers, some Russian, but chiefly German, who took the greatest pains with them, and just now the Chinese are showing the Germans how well they have learned their lesson. (Laughter.) These promising pupils of the Germans are commanded by officers who have learned their lessons very well, and who have made the same fact plain to the Allied Troops. One cannot place any reliance upon the Chinese, however, as fighters. Brave they are undoubtedly, yet he would indeed be a foolish man who would sally into battle against Occidental, or Japanese, troops at the head of Chinese troops however well trained, because there is simply no reliance to be placed upon them. They may fight like heroes every day of the week, but all at once a cloud appears on the horizon of a shape which betokens ill-luck—(laughter)—or a particular bird chirps seven times—(renewed laughter)—and they instantly march back to their quarters and calmly have tea as if no state of war existed at all. (Laughter.) They are not warriors by nature; they look upon the trade of the soldier as that of a paid executioner. You cannot get a Chinese gentleman to accept a commission in the Army or the Navy, because they are very logical and say: "The pen is mightier than the sword!" and act up to it. The Chinese respect the Japanese now more than they respect anyone else because the Japanese thrashed them well, and not only did that but were just with them. The Chinese were the first to recognise that the Japanese knew when to be stern and when to be lenient. I am certain that Japan could civilize China in one-tenth part of the time and at a tenth part of the cost.

in blood and money that any other Power would require to expend in the process. I wonder how many people are aware that the strongest and largest and most powerful war ship afloat is a Japanese vessel? We have now more than 15,000 Indian troops in China, which is a great pity from one point of view: You would hardly credit it, but it is a fact, that an impression appears to have got abroad, and very widely too, amongst the Chinese, that the reason of their presence there is that all the white British soldiers have been killed in South Africa!

After exhibiting photographic views of Wei-hai-wei, and of Port Arthur, an allegorical picture of "The Yellow Peril" and many other lantern-slides, Mr. Diósy in conclusion said; I thank you very much for the kind patience with which you have listened to my remarks, and I should like you to turn this one closing fact over in your minds. Remember that the danger of Chinese Industrial Competition, as set forth in my book *The New Far East*, is a real danger, it is no mere fancy, and you will have to consider whether it may not after all be a blessing in disguise, because when that danger begins to loom, when we see the dark cloud of Chinese competition coming nearer, it may be—it seems almost impossible—that we shall pull ourselves together and overhaul all our methods of production, and that we shall—it seems almost too good to be true—sink our stupid political differences and try and stand together as we needs must if we are to survive, shoulder to shoulder, brain and muscle, capital and labour, working together in order to face the great danger which may be the outcome of the solution of the "Chinese Puzzle." (Loud Applause.)

The proceedings terminated with hearty Votes of Thanks to the Lecturer for his Address and to the Chairman for presiding.

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